

U.S., Iraqi troops team-up in Taji

By Sgt. Jon Cupp
1-1 Cav. Public Affairs

CAMP TAJI, Iraq - Iraqi Army troops from the 2nd Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army

Division conducted operations in the Taji Market north of the Iraqi capital Dec. 28 in order to improve security and reduce sectarian violence in the area.

The citizens, who have

become tired of the insurgent aggression in the area, requested the assistance of Iraqi and coalition forces, said 1st Lt. Garry Flanders, a platoon leader for Troop D, 1st

Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment.

In order to help, the Iraqi troops, with the assistance of Soldiers from Troop D, 1st Bn, 82nd FA, closed a road and moved a checkpoint from one location to another after performing reconnaissance of the area. They also conducted cordon and search operations to look for weapons caches, and incorporated other vital security measures in the market.

"It's important for the Iraqi Army, and the Iraqi security forces, to take responsibility for security in Iraq and today has been one of those events where they are getting better at doing that," said Lt. Col. Martin Clausen, commander, 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment.

"Taji Market has been an important crossroads for insurgent activity."

Flanders, a native of



(Photo by Sgt. Jon Cupp, 1-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

Watching from a guard tower on Camp Taji, Lt. Col. Martin Clausen (left), and Staff Sgt. David Riggs, observe a joint operation taking place between Iraqi Army troops and Soldiers of Troop D, 1st Bn., 82nd Field Artillery Regt Dec.28 in the Taji Market.

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Yusufiyah animals, residents, benefit from veterinary care visit

By Spc. Chris McCann
2-10 Mtn. Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE YUSUFYIAH, Iraq - In the rural areas south of Baghdad, homes are often made of mud and roofed with sheet metal or mats made of beaten reeds. A cow or two and a flock of sheep in the yard complete the scene. But animals can get sick, and due to terrorism - whether sect-against-sect or against coalition forces - travel is danger-

ous for veterinarians, too.

To begin addressing this issue, the Multi-National Division - Baghdad veterinarian, Lt. Col. Neil Ahle, and several Soldiers of the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) conducted a veterinary operation in a schoolyard in Al-Taraq, Iraq Dec. 22.

"One problem of the country at large is the infrastructure," Ahle said, noting that while schools are opening and water treat-

ment plants are coming back on line, medical and veterinary care in rural areas is still floundering.

"With the lack of refrigeration, vaccines go bad," Ahle explained. "And with the violence between tribes and sects, veterinarians don't go out. The animals have suffered, as well as the crops. Meat, milk and wool are very big businesses here."

Everyone pays the price for the loss,

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"What are your hopes for the coming year?"



"To make it back home safely to my family."

-Staff Sgt. Jaime Ibarra
Troop B, 1st Squadron,
7th Cavalry Regiment

"I hope to stay alive and for all my guys to stay alive."

-Spc. Chuck Hewitt
Troop B, 1st Squadron,
7th Cavalry Regiment

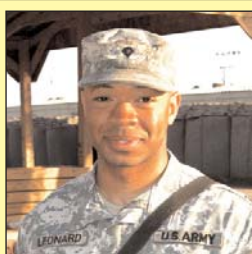


"I hope to get promoted and hope that everyone has a good year."

-Spc. Thomas Solis
Headquarters Company, 2nd
Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment

"I hope to get home safe."

-Staff Sgt. Erik Babb
Company A,
115th Brigade Support Battalion



"... to quit smoking."

-Spc. Kenneth Leonard
Company A,
15th Brigade Troops Battalion

"I hope that we have a more peaceful time here in Iraq."

-Pfc. Ronald Russell
Troop D, 1st Battalion,
82nd Field Artillery Regiment



Arabic Phrase of the Day

kaamira

**Defined:
camera**

Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

**High: 57
Low: 37**



Tomorrow

**High: 51
Low: 42**



Saturday

**High: 56
Low: 37**

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Soldiers improve relations with local Iraqis by helping livestock

Vet

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Ahle added.

When Ahle appeared at the Al-Taraq school with his medical kits and Soldiers of Company C, 4-31 announcing that free medical care would be given to animals, it wasn't long before people arrived with their livestock in tow.

With no chute to funnel the animals through, separating those that had been vaccinated from those that hadn't, the Soldiers went to work with steel pickets and engineer tape to create makeshift fences to guide the animals along.

Two shepherds brought a flock of sheep and goats next - about 60 animals, from a full-curl ram to a tiny brown kid goat born only days before.

Ahle and the shepherds seemed to have a moment of consternation. How to get all of

these sheep through the process and not get them mixed up? A moment later, Navy Cmdr. Mike Sanchez, a civil affairs officer with MND-B, had chalk to mark the sheep's heads when they'd been treated, and the shepherd was holding up his first candidate for a dose of wormer, vitamins and vaccine. He gamely continued, holding up each of the sheep and then the goats.

A cow came in that was mostly healthy except for the horn that had curled around, poised to penetrate its skull. The woman who brought it in said she did not know how to help the animal.

With six Soldiers holding the animal against a concrete pillar, Ahle borrowed a pocketknife with a saw and cut off part of the horn. He explained that if uncut, the horn would slowly penetrate the animal's sinus cavity, causing pain and



(Photos by Spc. Chris McCann, 2-10 Mtn. Public Affairs)

An Iraqi shepherd carries a lamb to be vaccinated and treated with wormer during a veterinary operation in Al-Taraq, Iraq. Livestock forms a critical part of the local economy in rural villages south of Baghdad.

infection.

By noon, Ahle and his de facto assistants had treated 95 sheep and five cattle. They had trimmed hooves and horns, wrestled goats, and been dragged through the mud.

"Maybe by doing this veterinary care, we'll get a vet in

the area to step up," he said. "We put a lot of effort into many areas, but pushing the Iraqi people to step up and do it - well, this is one way to do that."

Sgt. Joseph Strauch, a radio operator with Co. C and a native of Buffalo, N.Y., helped wrestle sheep. He said he enjoyed the chance to do something different.

"It was something new," Strauch said. "It's not every day you herd sheep. It's the most interesting thing I've done in Iraq."

Staff Sgt. Frank Hutchinson, a squad leader with the company and a Tampa, Fla., native, said he'd never worked with sheep in his life.

"I just adapt very well," Hutchinson said. "I just showed 'em who's boss!"

For the next veterinary operation, Ahle especially wants a head-chute to hold cattle still.

"When you're dealing with a 1200 or 1500-pound cow, you're going to go for a ride," he said. "But I think we all had a good time. I heard more laughing than complaining."



Lt. Col. Neil Ahle (left), Multi-National Division-Baghdad veterinary officer, gives a lamb a dose of wormer at a veterinary operation in Al-Taraq, Iraq.



(Photo by Sgt. Jon Cupp, 1-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

Soldiers from Troop D, 1st Bn, 82nd FA Reg. patrol Taji Market, a shopping area north of Baghdad, while doing vehicle searches Dec. 28. The Soldiers worked with Iraqi troops from the 2nd Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division, as they performed reconnaissance and other cordon and search operations. The joint operation served as an effort to reinforce security measures in the market which has been called a "crossroads for insurgent activity."

Joint operation strengthens bonds between U.S., Iraqi troops

Market

From Page 1

Milledgeville, Ga. said that working with the Iraqi soldiers helps the U.S. troops understand how the Iraqi Army works.

"The operation gives us a chance to foster better working relationships with them, and more of an understanding of what they do and the assets they have, which gives us a clearer picture of how they operate," he said.

This joint operation, however, was not the first time that Flanders and his Soldiers have worked with the Iraqi security forces.

"We go occasionally with them and we've been on joint patrols before with them (the IAs) and the Iraqi police," added Flanders. "Anytime the Iraqis do these

types of patrols, they do a great job, so we have no worries."

Although this day did not involve engagements with insurgents, it's always best to remain vigilant said Sgt. John Salazar, a Troop D, 1st Bn., 82nd Field Artillery Regt. team leader.

"This is definitely one of those things we do day by day where we stay focused and watch the guys to our left and right," said Salazar. He added that he has a lot of respect for the IA troops who he often finds himself working alongside.

"I understand what they're trying to accomplish," said Salazar. "IAs have a different way of doing things, but they seem like they're really coming along. At some point, they need to be able to take over for themselves, and we're doing absolutely

everything we can to help them."

Besides just IA troops and Soldiers from D Troop, the joint operation also involved the help of Soldiers from the 410th Quartermaster Company attached to the 15th Sustainment Brigade, who performed as lookouts standing guard in towers, observing the action on the ground.

"We've had great cooperative support with them as we coordinate with their initial report," said Clausen. "They know what's going on and can definitely identify anything unusual."

Clausen summed up what he wants his Soldiers to take away from the operation.

"I hope they take away a better appreciation for the readiness of our Iraqi counterparts that they can build on for future and on-going operations," said Clausen.

Soldiers, Iraqi national policemen deliver supplies

By Cpl. Robert Yde
2-1 Cav. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD - Soldiers with Troop C, 1st Battalion, 18th Cavalry Regiment, currently attached to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, teamed up with their counterparts from the 1st Battalion, 6th Brigade, 2 Iraqi National Police Division to provide local school children with supplies and furniture Dec. 14.

Through the combined effort, more than 80 desks and 200 packages of various school supplies were delivered to the Maysalon Co-ed Primary School in Al-Doura's Meckanic neighborhood.

The school, which has more than 600 students, was selected after the leadership of Troop C met with the headmaster to discuss the school's needs and shortcomings.

According to Troop C commander, Capt. Adam Grim his Soldiers were enthusiastic about taking part in the humanitari-

an mission.

"My Soldiers were very excited about the chance to help the children in our area," he said. Grim said that the police officers were also happy to be able to participate in the mission, which he described as an investment in Iraq's future.

"The national police have taken great

strides to overcome much adversity," Grim explained. "They want to be a part of the solution in making this area a better place."

Grim added that both his Soldiers and the INP will continue to conduct missions like this one as they strive to improve the quality of life for the Iraqis in their area of responsibility.



(U.S. Army photo)

Children at the Maysalon Co-ed Primary School in the Meckanic neighborhood of Baghdad's Al-Doura district gather around a Soldier from Troop C, 1-14 Cavalry during a delivery of school supplies Dec. 14. The unit teamed up with local Iraqi national police officers to deliver more than 80 desks and 200 packages of school supplies to the school.

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